(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Selections to Group 'C' posts are made by Railway Recruitment Boards on all India basis. State-wise or region-wise statistics of the selected candidates are not maintained by Railway Recruitment Boards.

(d) There are 10,530 vacancies on North-East Frontier Railway as on 31.1.2006. Recruitment is a continuous process and therefore, no time frame can be fixed for the same.

Recruitment from North Eastern Region in Railways

2527. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are giving priority for development of the North Eastern Region;

(b) if so, whether the priority would be given for candidates coming from North Eastern Zone by N.F. Railway; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, category-wise and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARAINBHAI RATHWA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Direct recruitment of Group 'C' posts on Indian Railway is made by Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) within their respective jurisdiction. Candidates from any part of the country are free to apply in response to advertisement issued by any of the RRBs. Since Railways are an All India organization serving as an effective instrument of national integration, no discrimination or favour is done against or for any candidate on the basis of his place of residence. Selections are basically done on the basis of merit position of the candidates in the respective examination.

Reduction in rail fares

2528. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reduced the rail fare of AC-I and AC-II class only;

(b) if so, the reasons for not reducing the rail fare of IInd class and the reservation of berth/seat for the common passenger's facilities;

(c) whether there is a proposal under consideration of Government to reduce the fare and reservation charges of IInd class; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARAINBHAI RATHWA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Railways are incurring heavy losses from Sleeper Class and Second Class (Ordinary) which are subsidized from Upper Classes of passenger services and freight services. The reduction in fares and reservation charges will increase the losses.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Garib Rath Trains

2529. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been proposed to run Garib Rath trains between a few destinations in the country;

(b) if so, the features of the train, fare structure and the destinations between which the trains are proposed to be run;

(c) the reasons for lowering A/C Class fare structure, in the Budget of 2006-07; and

(d) the reasons for not lowering II sleeper/II class fare structure in the Budget of 2006-07?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) These will be fully air-conditioned trains havings fares about 25% lower than the present AC-3 Tier fares, and will run on the following sectors:

1. Delhi-Patna